THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no vacant post of Assistant Director in the Song and Drama Division at Manipur.

(c) Does not arise.

Functioning of PIB, Imphal

1173. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the PIB, Imphal is not functioning as smoothly as it was before transfer of the then AIO;

(b) the reasons for not filling up the post of AIO; and

(c) the staff strength in the bureau, alongwith the vacancy position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) An officer has been posted as AIO, Imphal.

(c) PIB, Imphal has a sanctioned strength of 20 posts. At present, only one post, of Information Assistant, is vacant.

Constitution of Punjab Wakf Board

1174. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state.

(a) as to why Government have not constituted Punjab Wakf Board;

(b) whether Government are aware that they have given an assurance to constitute the Board early;

(c) whether Government would constitute the Board within a time-frame; and

(d) how Government will justify their action in terms of Section 99 of the Wakf Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The issue regarding Constitution of a Common Wakf Board for the States of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh & Union Territory of Chandigarh is under consideration of the Government in consultation with the State Governments/Union Territory Administration concerned.

(b) A reply was given in the matter in Rajya Sabha on 30.11.98 but it was not an assurance.

(c) While efforts are being made to constitute the Board early, it is difficult to set a time frame for the purpose.

(d) Sub-section (3) of section 99 of the Wakf Act, 1995 provides that on the expiration of the period of supersession, the Government has two options namely either to extend the period of supersession for such further period as it may considered necessary or reconstitute the Board in the manner provided in the said Act. As such the action of the Government to extend the period of supersession from time to time is justified.

Implementation of Dry Laterines (Prohibition) Act, 1993

1175. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Human Rights Commission has constituted a high level committee to go into the implementation of the Dry Laterines (Prohibition) Act, 1993 and the rehabilitation of manual scavengers law; and

(b) if so, the progress made in implementation of the said laws in different States and the rehabilitation of the scavengers those rendered jobless?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) This Act is being implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development and as per information received from them, they are not aware of any such committees constituted by National Human Rights Commission to look into its implementation.